

VT Halter Marine, Inc.



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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VT HALTER MARINE TO BUILD A THIRD FISHERIES SURVEY VESSEL FOR NOAA

VT Halter Marine, Inc., a subsidiary of Vision Technologies Systems, Inc., announced that it will build another Fisheries Survey Vessel for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. NOAA exercised its option for the third of four planned vessels under an existing contract. This vessel is valued at approximately \$38 million. Construction will begin later this year with delivery planned during the second half of 2007.

VT Halter Marine designed the 208' FSVs in accordance with strict guidelines for acoustic quieting set by the International Council for Exploration of the Seas. The first ship in the class—*Oscar Dyson*—was delivered to NOAA on January 5, 2005 and is one of the most technologically advanced fisheries ships in the world. These NOAA sister ships, with a cutting-edge low acoustic signature, will have the ability to perform hydro-acoustic surveys of fish. They will also be able to conduct bottom and mid-water trawls while running physical and biological-oceanographic sampling during a single deployment--a combined capability unavailable in the private sector.

When completed, the ship will be home ported at the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service Mississippi Laboratory in Pascagoula, Miss. along with NOAA ships *Oregon II* and *Gordon Gunter*.

"This third FSV will be the next critical link in our vision to provide state-of-the-art fishery research capabilities along all the U.S. coasts," said retired Navy Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher Jr., Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "NOAA's fleet modernization will better enable us to manage our nation's valuable marine resources, thus sustaining healthy fish populations and a prosperous fishing industry."

"The FSV program showcases VT Halter Marine's ability to provide turnkey shipbuilding services from design to delivery. NOAA's decision to exercise its second option to construct a third FSV immediately after taking delivery of the first FSV also speaks positively for the standard of VT Halter Marine's products and services. We look forward to this opportunity to work with NOAA again to add a third FSV to their fleet," said Boyd E. King, CEO of VT Halter Marine. VT Halter Marine developed a highly technical FSV design, tailored it to meet NOAA's mission-specific requirements, and recently delivered the first of four planned new generation ships.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

VT Halter Marine is the marine operations of Vision Technologies Systems. Based in Pascagoula, Miss., more than 2600 vessels have been built at its facilities in the United States. VT Halter Marine designs, builds and repairs a wide variety of ocean-going vessels such as patrol vessels, oil recovery vessels, oil cargo vessels, ferries, logistic support vessels and survey vessels.

On the Web:

NOAA: www.noaa.gov

VT Halter Marine: www.vthaltermarine.com